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Farm Broadcasters Letter

Letter No. 2369

June 30, 1988

HAYNET

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture are establishing a national hay information network, named "HayNet," to help locate available hay and identify the drought-stricken areas that need forage for cattle feeding. Each week the participating states will tell USDA how much hay they have on hand and can spare, or how much they need. This information will be put into a national data bank, available to each state by electronic mail. Farmers who either have a supply of hay or who need hay should contact their state department of agriculture.

HAYING ON WATER BANK PROGRAM LANDS

On June 30, the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Interior approved emergency haying of certain Water Bank Program lands. Counties approved are those previously designated by USDA officials for emergency haying and grazing of Acreage Conservation Reserve and Conservation Use storage, and haying of Conservation Reserve Program acreage. There are about 524,000 acres in 12 states in the Water Bank Program. Approximately 350,000 of these acres could be used for haying if declared eligible. For details, check the local ASCS office.

\$50 MILLION FOR BULK GROUND BEEF

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has set aside an additional \$50 million in purchase bulk ground beef for domestic food assistance programs. According to Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng, the additional purchase of surplus bulk ground beef will help stabilize conditions in the commodity markets. USDA estimates that an additional \$50 million will purchase approximately 45 million pounds of bulk frozen ground beef.

HAYING & EMERGENCY FEED AS OF JUNE 27

Sec'y of Agriculture Richard Lyng authorized additional emergency provisions for drought areas. In counties approved for emergency haying and grazing of conservation use acreage and acreage conservation reserve, producers are permitted to sell their hay to anyone. Another provision allows the harvest of acreage conservation reserve, conservation use, and conservation reserve program lands in eligible counties to green chop--that's direct cutting, harvested wet--for immediate feeding to livestock or for silage. The Secretary also approved counties for the Emergency Feed Assistance Program which are already approved for the Emergency Feed Program.

JULY 12 CROP PRODUCTION

Special surveys of crop acreage will be taken in several states to ensure that the U.S. Department of Agriculture's July 12 Crop Production report reflects the impacts of the drought. The July 12 report will contain forecast acreage for harvest based on early-June survey data, supplemented with post-survey information to reflect conditions as of July 1. In addition, forecast harvested acreage for durum, spring wheat and oats in N. Dakota, S. Dakota, Montana and Minnesota will reflect special survey data collected during the last week of June and the first week of July.

COMMERCIAL RED MEAT PRODUCTION

Commercial red meat production for the U.S. in May 1988 totaled 3.21 billion pounds, up 8 percent from May 1987, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The January-May red meat production, at 16 billion pounds, was up 3 percent from last year. Beef production, at 1.92 billion pounds, was up 4 percent from last year. Veal production, at 30 million pounds, was down 6 percent. Pork production, at 1.23 billion pounds was up 15 percent from May 1987.

U.S. AG TRADE

U.S. agricultural exports for April were \$3.05 billion, the third month in a row that exports have topped \$3 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. U.S. exports to date for fiscal 1988, October to April, totaled \$20.9 billion in value, and 91.3 million metric tons. For the same period a year ago, the total was \$16.8 billion in value and 74.9 million metric tons in volume.

AG IMPORTS TO REACH \$21 BILLION

In fiscal year 1988, agricultural imports are now expected to reach \$21 billion, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This figure is about \$350 million, or 2 percent above last year's level and slightly above the previous record of \$20.9 billion set in fiscal 1986. While the overall volume of agricultural imports is expected to remain virtually unchanged from year-ago levels, the weaker dollar has pushed up the price the U.S. has to pay for foreign products.

GRAIN STOCKS

Corn stored in all positions on June 1, 1988, is estimated at 5.83 billion bushels, 8 percent below the June 1, 1987 level of 6.33 billion bushels, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Old crop wheat, stored in all positions on June 1, is estimated at 1.27 billion bushels, down 30 percent from June 1, 1987. This is the lowest June 1 total since June 1, 1982. Old crop durum wheat stored in all positions on June 1, is placed at 83 million bushels, 12 percent less than stocks on-hand a year ago. Soybeans stored in all positions on June 1 totaled 655 million bushels, down 22 percent from a year ago.

U.S. AG EXPORTS TO CHINA

U.S. agricultural exports to China in fiscal 1988 could exceed \$400 million, well above the \$211 million fiscal 1987. During 1987, the U.S. Department of Agriculture initiated four Export Enhancement Program sales of one million tons each. Two additional EEP wheat initiatives were made in early 1988. By the year 2000, China's grain output may approach 500 million tons, up from the 1983-1987 average of 394 million. However, per capita consumption probably will rise slowly, as gains in output may be offset by increases in population and feed use. China is expected to remain a net grain importer.

DROUGHT AND
WIND EROSION

The drought has caused a near-record wind erosion on over 13 million acres of land in the Great Plains in the past six months, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This season's damage is the second worst since 1935, when about 16 million acres of land were damaged in the region. North Dakota is hardest hit, with over 3½ million acres damaged. Other states with substantial damage include Texas, Colorado, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Montana.

SNOUT COUNT

The number of hogs and pigs living in the U.S. on June 1, 1988, is estimated at 56.2 million head, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This is 8 percent above a year ago and 15 percent above June 1, 1986. This is the highest June 1 inventory since 1983. The breeding inventory, at 7.53 million head, is 7 percent above last year and 17 percent above two years ago. The market hog inventory, at 48.7 million head, is 8 percent above a year ago and 15 percent above two years ago.

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1622...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) Recreation on the National Forests. On this edition of AGRICULTURE USA, Planning for the National Forests John Butruille.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1610...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; USDA expands emergency haying and feed programs; Farm-owned corn reserve update; High value products; Drought and chicken production.

CONSUMER TIME #1102...(Weekly reel of 2½-3 min features) Visiting the National Forests; Changing chicken prices; Creating super trees; Update on Gypsy Moth; Poultry zapping with electron beam.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Wed, July 6, Weekly crop and weather, Dairy production; Tues, July 12, Crop and weather, U.S. crop production, Soviet grain; Thurs, July 13, Livestock and poultry outlook, World grain, Crop production, World oilseed, World cotton. Dial the USDA National News Line 202-488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 p.m. ET each working day.

FROM THE NEWS SERVICE: In addition to our normal news lines, we are offering a daily crop weather update which is changed Monday through Friday at 9 A.M. Eastern Time. The number for this report is 202-447-2545.

TELEVISION SERVICE programs, A BETTER WAY, DOWN TO EARTH, AGRICULTURAL UPDATE and SATELLITE NEWS are available on satellite Westar IV, audio 6.2 or 6.8 as follows:

Thursdays....AG UPDATE/SATELLITE NEWS, 7:30-7:45 p.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

Saturdays....A BETTER WAY, 10:00-10:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X
ORIGINAL DOWN TO EARTH, 10:30-11:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 9X
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 11:00-11:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 9X

Mondays.....A BETTER WAY, 8:00-8:30 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D
REPEAT DOWN TO EARTH, 8:30-9:00 a.m. ET....Transponder 12D
UPLINK SATELLITE NEWS/AG UPDATE, 9:00-9:15 a.m. ET.....Transponder 12D

A BETTER WAY is also available on The Learning Channel SATCOM 3R, Transponder 2, Audio 6.8 each Thursday at 10:30 a.m. ET.

OFF MIKE

The NAFB North Central Regional Meeting at Lake Okoboji, Iowa, was a success due to the efforts of regional VP Mike Hanson, WOW, Omaha, and hosts Keith Bishop, KICD, Spencer, and Doug Cooper, KWMT, Fort Dodge. Doug, incidently, was elected new regional VP. The attendance was one of the largest this year among the regions. Meeting highlights includes a "State-of-American-Agriculture" panel discussion which included Am. Farm Bureau Fed. Pres. Dean Kleckner; the Pres., Nat'l Cattlemen's Assoc., Dale Humphries; Don Gingerich the Pres.-elect, Nat'l Pork Producers and Roger Asendorf, past Pres., Am. Soybean Assoc. Former NAFB Pres. Ken Root, never known as one to keep folks in the dark, managed to do so during the press conference held by his recently-formed Nat'l AgriChemical Retailers Assoc. As NARA President Dan Frieberg spoke, a power failure took place--and the lights went out--the result of a

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local thunderstorm (which ultimately dropped up to two inches of much-needed rain in parts of NW Iowa).

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Radio and Television Division